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The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Letter dated 31 August 2010 from the Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as the Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I would like to draw your attention to the statement adopted today by the Bureau of the Committee on the resumption of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians on the permanent status issues (see annex).

I should appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 15 and 16, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Paul **Badji**
Chair
Committee on the Exercise of the
Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People

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Annex to the letter dated 31 August 2010 from the Chair of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on the resumption of permanent status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians

31 August 2010

The Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People welcomes the decision of the Israeli and Palestinian sides to resume direct negotiations towards resolving all permanent status issues. We wish to express our appreciation to the members of the Quartet, including the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to the Arab League, and other members of the international community for their untiring and constructive efforts in support of this initiative. The summit to be convened in Washington, D.C. by the United States Administration to launch the negotiations is broadly supported by the international community.

We are looking forward to a serious, time-bound, credible and comprehensive political dialogue with a clear agenda and terms of reference aimed at resolving, by the 2011 target date, as called for by the Quartet, all the permanent status issues, including the status of Jerusalem and the question of Palestine refugees in accordance with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions, bringing about an end to the Israeli occupation, and leading to the establishment of a viable, sovereign and contiguous Palestinian State on the basis of the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living in peace and security with its neighbours.

For the ultimate success of this endeavour, it is imperative that the parties scrupulously comply with their existing commitments, particularly those undertaken within the framework of the Road Map, and refrain from unlawful measures, destabilizing unilateral steps on the ground and provocations, which could jeopardize the outcome of the negotiations. To this end, the current Israeli partial moratorium on settlement construction must be maintained and expanded to include a complete ban on all settlement construction without exception, including in East Jerusalem. Israel should dismantle settlement outposts without delay and conditions, as called for in the Road Map. The evictions, house demolitions and revocations of residency rights in East Jerusalem also must stop.

It is crucial that during this round the parties build on the progress achieved during the previous rounds of permanent status negotiations. We are also looking forward to a sustained and vigorous engagement by the international community, extending beyond the inaugural summit, which would translate into a credible mechanism to hold the parties to their obligations, monitor progress, and ensure that the negotiating process is conducted in good faith. The planned presence of representatives from Egypt and Jordan during the talks in an observer capacity is a groundbreaking and welcome step, which should be sustained and built upon.

The Bureau wishes to emphasize the importance of supportive diplomatic action within the region, including by the League of Arab States, and centred around the Arab Peace Initiative. Potential progress on the Israeli-Palestinian track should

be buttressed by a parallel revitalization of the other tracks of the Middle East peace process, leading to a reinvigorated engagement with all stakeholder Governments and culminating in a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the question of Palestine and the Arab-Israeli conflict as a whole.

Sustained action by the international community in the diplomatic arena in pursuit of a political settlement should go hand in hand with increased and generous support by donors for the Palestinian Authority's plans to build the essential institutional foundations of a future Palestinian State. For its part, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People will continue its constructive engagement in support of the Middle East peace process, until the conflict is resolved in all its aspects in accordance with international law, and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, national independence and sovereignty, and the right of return of the refugees are fully realized.